

2-17-2019

# The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making: Empowering Employees and Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers and Doers!: A Theoretical and Practical Training Handbook for Leaders

Michelle Chin Loy

Nova Southeastern University, [michelle@nova.edu](mailto:michelle@nova.edu)

Brittney Coe

Nova Southeastern University, [bcoe@nova.edu](mailto:bcoe@nova.edu)

Hannah Gordon

Nova Southeastern University, [hgordon@nova.edu](mailto:hgordon@nova.edu)

Elizabeth Hernández

Nova Southeastern University, [eh917@mynsu.nova.edu](mailto:eh917@mynsu.nova.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse\\_stuarticles](https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_stuarticles)



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

## NSUWorks Citation

Loy, Michelle Chin; Coe, Brittney; Gordon, Hannah; and Hernández, Elizabeth, "The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making: Empowering Employees and Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers and Doers!: A Theoretical and Practical Training Handbook for Leaders" (2019). *Fischler College of Education: Student Articles*. 22.

[https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse\\_stuarticles/22](https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_stuarticles/22)

This Handbook is brought to you for free and open access by the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fischler College of Education: Student Articles by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact [nsuworks@nova.edu](mailto:nsuworks@nova.edu).

# The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making: Empowering Employees and Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers and Doers!

## *A Theoretical and Practical Training Handbook for Leaders*

Michelle Chin Loy

Nova Southeastern University, [michelle@nova.edu](mailto:michelle@nova.edu)

Brittney Coe

Nova Southeastern University, [bcoe@nova.edu](mailto:bcoe@nova.edu)

Hannah Gordon

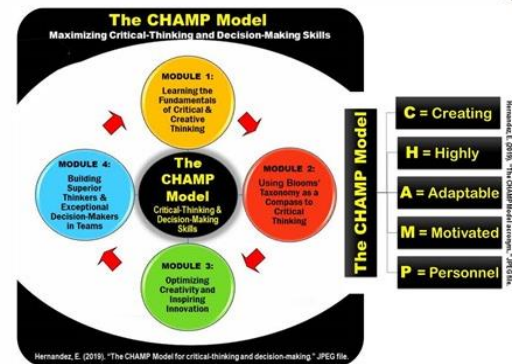
Nova Southeastern University, [hgordon@nova.edu](mailto:hgordon@nova.edu)

Elizabeth Hernandez

Nova Southeastern University, [eh917@mynsu.nova.edu](mailto:eh917@mynsu.nova.edu)  
[elizabeth@dsanc.net](mailto:elizabeth@dsanc.net)

## The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making: Empowering Employees and Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers and Doers

*A Theoretical and Practical Training Handbook  
for Leaders*



By: Michelle Chin Loy, Brittney Coe, Hannah Gordon, and Elizabeth Hernandez

Hernandez, E. (2019). "Handbook title page , The CHAMP Model for critical-thinking and decision-making." JPEG file.

ORGL 8770CRN 30003  
Critical Thinking for Decision Making

Nova Southeastern University  
February 17, 2019

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS . . .

### **Michelle Chin Loy**

Currently working at a private nonprofit University, Michelle Chin Loy is the Director of Accounting—a job position that she truly enjoys. Chin Loy currently pursues a Doctor of Education with a concentration in Organizational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University. She is a strong advocate for conservation and saving our natural resources and animals. With this belief and passion, Chin Loy’s goal is to use her accounting knowledge and leadership skills within the conservation community.

### **Brittney Coe**

Brittney Coe is currently pursuing her Doctorate Degree in Organizational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University. Coe is a 22-year veteran teacher with her degree in Exceptional Student Education. She has worked with students from preschool through Middle School. Coe’s early work with students with autism gave her a strong foundation in communication and problem solving skills. She lives in South Florida where she enjoys cooking, music, and practicing yoga.

### **Hannah Gordon**

Currently, Hannah Gordon works as both a full-time ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher at a South Florida, private school, and as an adjunct professor at a mid-size, private university. She is completing her Doctorate degree in Organizational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University with the intention of using her degree to work for educational publishing companies.

### **Elizabeth Hernández**

Possessing over 20 years of combined work experience in public service and private sector, Elizabeth Hernandez currently pursues a Doctor of Education with a concentration in Organizational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University. A transformational leader, she aims at honing her global leadership skills through higher education while learning to become an influential global leader in the contemporary business environment. Hernandez travels often on business, at-home and abroad, conducting media work as part of an entertainment agency. As a catalyst for change, Hernandez expertise focuses on organizational behavior and human development, business administration, global leadership, and team-building management. On her free time, Hernandez enjoys spending time with her family and volunteering worldwide through philanthropic endeavors.

## Table of Contents

<b>About the Authors.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Figures and Tables.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Introduction to Handbook .....</b>	<b>1</b>
The CHAMP Model	
<b>Module 1: Learning the Fundamentals of Critical &amp; Creative Thinking .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Module 1 Introduction	
Fundamentals of Critical Thinking and Critical Thinking in the workplace	
Fundamentals of Creative Thinking and Creative Thing in the workplace	
Differences between Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking	
Applications for Critical and Creative Thinking	
Creative Thinking	
Critical Thinking	
Assessments of Critical and Creative Thinking	
Module 1 Closing Remarks	
Module 1 References	
<b>Module 2: Using Bloom’s Taxonomy as Compass to Critical Thinking.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Module 2 Introduction	
Bloom’s Taxonomy: From the Student Classroom, to the Business Office	
Do you have a “Can Do” Attitude?	
Module 2 Closing Remarks	
Module 2 References	
<b>Module 3: Optimizing Creativity and Inspiring Innovation .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Module 3 Introduction	
Psychological Mindedness	
Creative Thinking	
Creative Visualization	
Divergent Thinking	
Design Thinking as a Creative Framework	
User Focus	
Problem Framing	
Diversity	
Module 3 Closing Remarks	
Module 3 References	
<b>Module 4: Building Superior Thinkers &amp; Decision-Makers in Teams.....</b>	<b>32</b>
Module 4 Introduction	
Leaders Prepare and Plan Training Program	
Creating a Powerful Training Sales-Pitch to Engage Employees	
Leaders Execute Training Program	
Training Employees to Become High-Performing Thinkers & Doers!	
Empowering Training Activities for Teams: Module 4	
How to Assemble Winning Teams	
Building Teams as Think-Tank Experts: Tuckman’s Group Model	
Module 4 Closing Remarks	
Module 4 References	
<b>Conclusion to Handbook .....</b>	<b>43</b>

## List of Figures and Tables

### Figures

A.	The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making .....	1
1.1	Module 1: The CHAMP Model Learning Fundamentals of Critical Thinking .....	3
1.2	Holistic and Analytical Assessments .....	8
2.1	Module 2: The CHAMP Model Using Bloom’s Taxonomy as a Compass.....	14
2.2	Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy.....	17
2.3	Bloom’s Taxonomy “Can-Do” Assess Indicators for Critical and Creative Thinking....	19
2.4	Employee Progress Monitoring Tool.....	20
3.1	Module 3: The CHAMP Model Optimizing Creativity and Inspiring Innovation .....	24
3.2	Types of Creative Thinking & Resources to Foster Innovation & Creative Thinking ....	25
3.3	Thinking Process: Imagery Based, Divergent, and Distant Semantic Relationships .....	29
4.1	Module 4: The CHAMP Model Building Superior Thinkers and Doers in Teams .....	33
4.2	Engaging Employees: Sales-Pitch Flyer .....	35
4.3	Fundamentals of Assembling Winning Work Teams .....	38
4.4	Tuckman’s Group Development Model .....	39
4.5	How Team Synergy Forms & Builds Think-Tank Experts [Tuckman’s Grp. Dev. Model] ...	40

### Tables

1.1	Critical Thinking versus Creative Thinking [Comparison] .....	6
-----	---	---

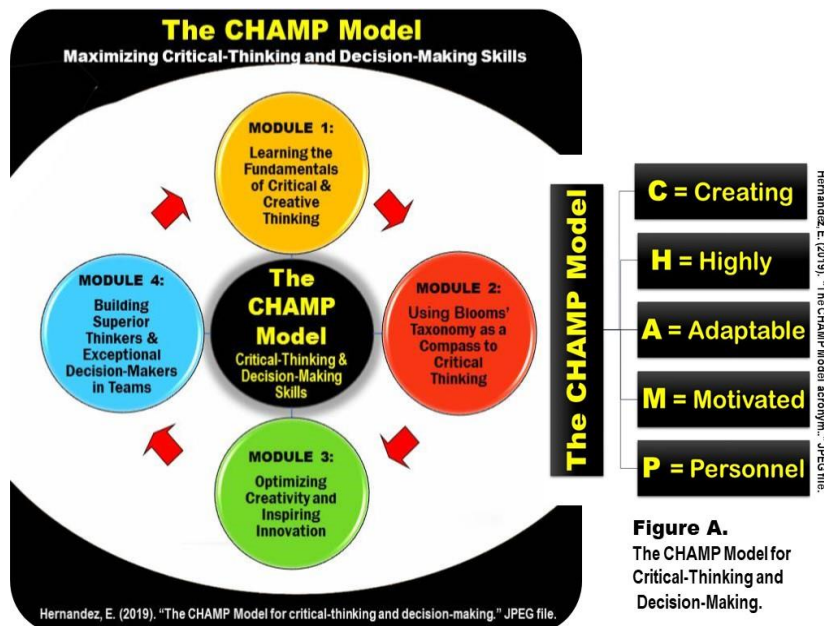
# INTRODUCTION

## **The CHAMP Model**: Empowering Employees & Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers & Doers! A Theoretical And Practical Training Handbook For Leaders

Leaders looking to gain competitive advantage in their industries understand that the organization's most valuable asset is its human resources. Thus, in the 21st century business world, companies thriving to increase market share must consider equipping their workforce with the training and development needed to optimize decision-making skills. To assist companies in formulating a robust training program, Chin Loy, Coe, Gordon, and Hernandez (2019), the research team presenting this handbook, have formulated a new viable instructional framework called *CHAMP Model*, acronym for *creating highly adaptable and motivated personnel*. This original training framework will serve as blueprint to initiate and hone critical thinking measures in the workplace.

### **The CHAMP Model: Components**

As seen in Figure A, the *CHAMP Model* is a conceptual cycle of continual growth that encompasses four developmental modules. These comprise of pragmatic instructions on how to get employees engaged in adopting activities that foster



**Figure A.**  
The CHAMP Model for  
Critical-Thinking and  
Decision-Making.

cognitive thinking, higher-order thinking, creativity and innovation, and superior thinkers and decision-makers in teams. Formulated systematically to develop and ignite an organizational culture of empowered innovative thinkers, these building blocks (modules) intend to guide employees through progressive personal and professional development.

# MODULE 1:

## Learning the Fundamentals of Critical and Creative Thinking

By: Michelle Chin Loy

"Before anything else,  
preparation is the key to  
success."

-Alexander  
Graham Bell

Image: fotosearch.com

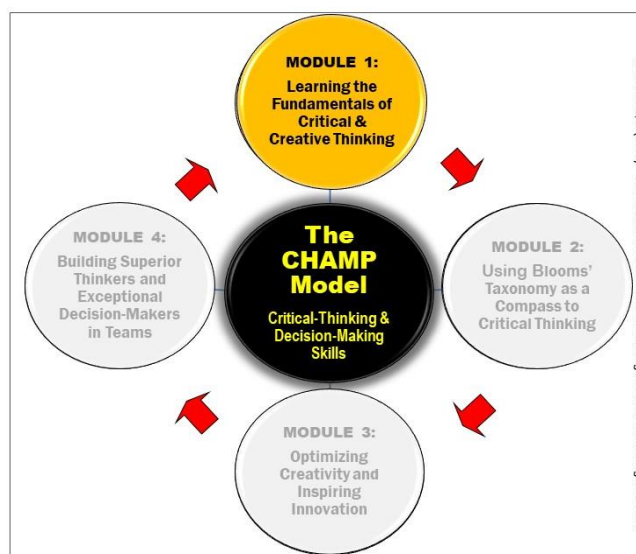




## Module 1 Introduction

The use of critical thinking skills is a leading challenge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century organization. Organizations are identifying the need for critical thinking for the success of the companies. Executive administrators have realized that employees with critical thinking skills have the ability to use the information to see all aspects of a situation, and are able to make outstanding decisions (Reed, 2018). The administrators have acknowledged critical thinking as an essential element of employee development. According to Reed (2018), The U.S. Department of Labor has recognized critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making as aspired workplace skills. This was proven by the Indeed.com analysis that postings with this skill increased tremendously (Reed, 2018). Educators and I as an administrator think and talk about how important critical thinking is to the organizations (Facione, 2015).

Creative thinking is extremely important in today's organizations. Globalization is increasing at an extreme rate and we have to stay ahead of the curve to stay competitive. We must have innovation and creative thinking skills as part of our everyday environment in order to have solutions to the problems, and challenges in the organization (Radovic, 2016). Figure 1.1 illustrates Module 1 in the CHAMP Model: Learning the Fundamentals of Critical and Creative Thinking. This module will focus on critical and creative thinking, and the importance to the organizations.



**Figure 1.1.** Module 1 of The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making.

## **Fundamentals of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is a process to apply, analyze, and evaluate the information for an answer. We can improve the quality of our thinking by setting standards, and having effective communication and problem-solving abilities (Wang & Zheng, 2016). The core of critical thinking is the six cognitive skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation (Facione, 2015). We have to understand the situation, data, process, or belief in order to do the analysis. An analysis is examining the data, arguments, ideas, and recognizing differences and similarities when there are two solutions to a problem. After the analysis is completed then there is the evaluation. This evaluation skill is identifying the facts correctly, and that makes us credible on a given topic. The next skill is inference that we have to look and consider relevant information, and what they imply to obtain a conclusion from opinions, data, and submissions forms (Facione, 2015). After the inference skill, there is the explanation skill, which is the ability to describe the methodology, reason justification, the interpretation quality, and the criteria used to attain the results. With this skill, the critical thinkers can explain their thought process, analysis, reasons, and solution. In addition, we can challenge ourselves with the self-regulation skill by applying the analysis and evaluation to our own judgement. Using the self-regulation skill can improve and revise our previous opinion if necessary. This skill makes us ask ourselves how are we doing with this analysis? How is our methodology? (Facione, 2015).

## **Critical Thinking in the Workplace**

Critical thinking and problem solving in the workplace give us the ability to take charge, solve problems, make decisions, communicate, and take the appropriate actions (Morrison, 2017). Teamwork, cohesive thinking, and productivity increases in the organizations that

integrate critical thinking. It is through critical thinking we look at all angles of a situation, and the different ways to answer (Reed, 2018). According to Wang and Zheng (2016), there are two components of critical thinking:

1. A set of belief and information processing skills.
2. The habit of using the set of belief and information processing skills to guide our thinking in the workplace.

To lessen the impact of critical thinking, we should learn the thinking skills of analyzing, reasoning, evaluating, solving, and making decisions that are the basics of cognitive thinking. These skills are used to make decisions or solve complex problems. Critical thinking is methodical for the various processes, operates by logical standards, and supported by beliefs (Wang & Zheng, 2016).

### **Fundamentals of Creative Thinking**

Creative thinking is independent, right brain focused, and a skill of creating new or original ideas. This way of thinking is an improvement on a process that has worked within the organization. Creative thinking is to think outside of the usual examples and ideas within a manual. An example is using the process to register applicants to a program, and apply it to employees registering for professional development (Huff, 2014). We have to start thinking of ways to create innovative and new approaches to current situations and challenges. Creative thinkers are knowledgeable, confident communicators, and able to understand the situation (Radovic, 2016).

### **Creative Thinking in the Workplace**

Creative thinkers are open-minded and risk-takers for we accept criticism, evaluate new ideas, learn from our mistakes, and realize our successes. We are flexible for we have the

abilities to adapt, and think outside of the normal every day routine within the organization (Radovic, 2016). A component of creative thinking is brainstorming. We can think of ideas that are more creative by adding, or improving on a current or previous idea. Brainstorming, knowledge of the idea, and creative skill help to support the beliefs that attention to other ideas help to create new ideas. Brainstorming is a process of thinking of new or unique ideas within a group discussion (Montag-Smit & Maertz, 2017).

### Differences of Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking

In critical thinking, logical decisions are made after analysis and evaluation of the information. Creative thinking is to create a new or unique idea on a situation or problem, and does not take into account the accepted principles. Critical thinking applies the accepted principles to decisions, and assess the creative ideas for practicality. Table 1.1 shows critical thinking versus creative thinking (The Peak Performance Center, 2017).

**Table 1.1** Critical Thinking vs. Creative Thinking.

<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>Creative Thinking</b>
Analytical	Generative
Convergent	Divergent
Left brain	Right-brain
Logical	Intuitive
Sequential	Imaginative
Objective	Subjective
Reasoning	Speculating
Reality Based	Fantasy Based
Vertical	Lateral
Probability	Possibility
Judgmental	Non-judgmental
Verbal	Visual
Hypothesis testing	Hypothesis forming
Closed-ended	Open-minded
Pattern Users	Pattern Seekers

The Peak Performance Center, 2017.

### Applications for Critical and Creative Thinking

#### Creative Thinking

Creative thinking must be developed within the organization. The different methods used to stimulate our creative thinking are brainstorming, asking questions, imagery, and analogies

(Huff, 2014). The “Yale Assessment of Thinking” is a self-scored test that can help us verify our thinking abilities in intuition, rationale, and self-knowledge. This test informs us on our areas of weakness, and we can improve our thinking skills by professional development, information sessions, and workshops (Huff, 2014).

### **Critical Thinking**

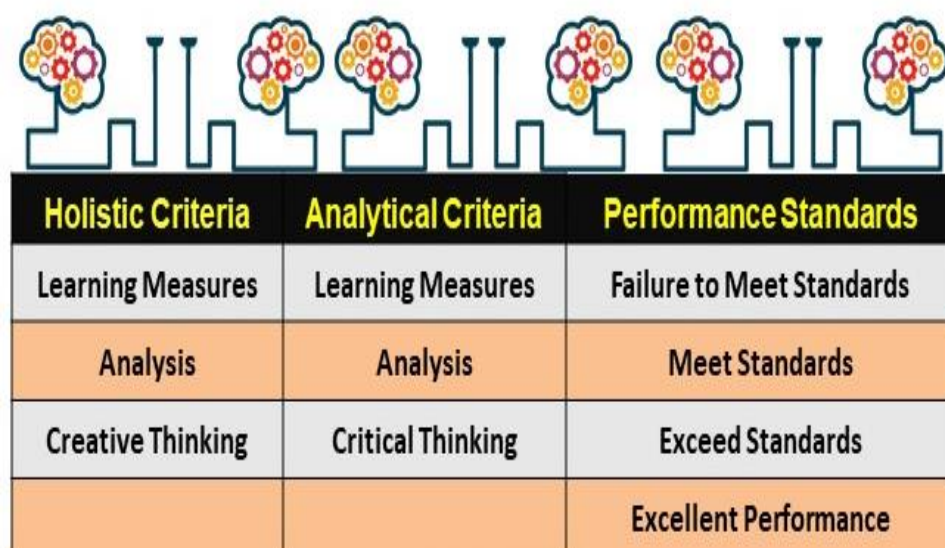
Critical thinking is crucial in the organizations in order to endure, and be competitive in this rapidly changing global market. These critical skills are foremost in any organization, and we as critical thinkers should be cognizant of our own skill talents. How do we contribute to the needed critical skills within the organization? Critical thinking and problem solving involves analysis by asking the questions and getting answers to solve the problem (Sousa & Wilks, 2018). For global teamwork and leadership there must be networking, and the ability to adapt to technology. With this networking and adaptability, there is oral and written communication that lead to logical thinking and clear communication. The thinking and communications help to evaluate and analyze the information. Then there can be curiosity and imagination that motivate creativity for unique knowledge and innovation. We need to ask questions and find the answers. (Sousa & Wilks, 2018).

### **Assessments of Critical and Creative Thinking**

In an organization, our standard of performance is measured and evaluated. This is our performance appraisal that is given once or twice a year by our supervisors. Assessments are detailed lists of skills for learning results with performance measurement levels. We can apply a rating scale or standards of performance to our critical and creative thinking skills within the organization (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015). There has to be a distinction between the assessment purposes and levels when deciding the scale. Each criteria level has a label and a description, and

each level of performance of excellent, satisfactory or poor has a description. The assessment goal is to help improve the thinking process and to see if changes are needed. A benchmark is a standard of satisfaction, and can be determined within the critical thinking assessment if a necessary skill is needed before additional training, or professional development. The benchmark can also fit the creative thinking skill on a different level of performance (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015).

We can have two types of assessments, holistic and analytical. Holistic is for the creative thinking for it evaluates at a high level all the criteria as a whole, and determines the quality (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015). For example, there are three evaluation criteria, M, A, and C that are the goals of learning measures, analysis, and critical thinking. In addition, there are four performance standards of Failure to Meet Standards, Meet Standards, Exceeds Standards, and Excellent Performance (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015). The analytical assessment is for critical thinking for it evaluates each critical criteria. This analysis gives us a more detailed analysis of the strengths and weakness of our skills. The same four performance standards are used as in the holistic assessment, but the goals are more specific. Figure 1.2 depicts the holistic and analytical assessments (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015).



Holistic Criteria	Analytical Criteria	Performance Standards
Learning Measures	Learning Measures	Failure to Meet Standards
Analysis	Analysis	Meet Standards
Creative Thinking	Critical Thinking	Exceed Standards
		Excellent Performance

Hobbies like crafts, martial arts, and playing an instrument can be included for creativity. This aspect gives us an idea if critical thinkers with

**Figure 1.2.** Holistic & Analytical Assessments. Chin Loy, M. (2019). "Holistic & Analytical Assessments." JPEG file. Images: lemouvementassociatif-franche.comte.org

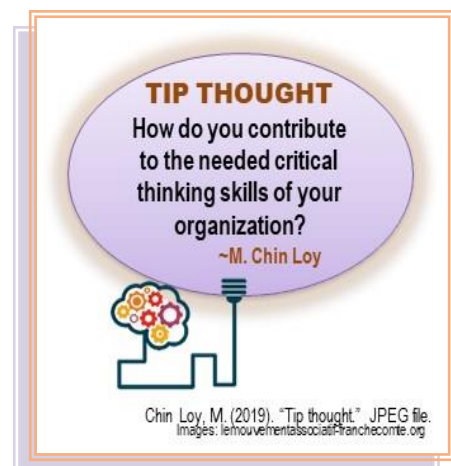
hobbies can have creative thinking abilities, and how many actually participate (Huff, 2014). Likert-scale questions are scored on improvement in certain goal skills, and can be used in the critical and creative thinking skill assessments. Examples of the questions are help me improve my creative skill, increase my skill when working in a group, and improve my leadership skills (Huff, 2014).

Another form of a survey can be a *Critical Thinking Self-Rating Survey*, which we answer yes, or no to the given questions. This can be a self-evaluation or one given by the organization. These questions are for our frame of mind for critical thinking within a time. There can be 100 questions and each is worth one point. If we score 80 points or above on the yes answers then our mind is positive towards critical thinking over the given time. If our score is 55 or less then our mind is negative towards critical thinking. As score between 80 and 55 is our mind is neutral towards critical thinking. If necessary, there are other detailed surveys and not time driven (Facione, 2015). These assessments are measurable, and a verification of learning goal achievements while emphasizing the areas for improvement (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015). A critical thinking assessment can be qualitative by evaluating our work, strengths, and weaknesses to performance portrayals. The quantitative approach is by assigning grades to the assessment. The grading criteria can be 1 = 50%, 2 = 70%, 3 = 85%, and 4 = 100% for each criteria, and computing a weighted score across the board for a total grade (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015).

## Module 1 Closing Remarks

Today's leaders have to be able to adapt, think, and be mindful of the constant changes in order to stay competitive and successful. Critical thinking and creative thinking are essential skills, and they need to be assessed and honed in order for the organization to stay ahead of the curve in today's global market. Employees must be able to brainstorm, think, analyze, ask questions, and get the answers in order to find the solutions. We know that critical and creative thinking are crucial in the organizations. In order to see our strengths and weaknesses, critical and creative assessments are necessary within an organization for they highlight the needed skills (Schaefer & Stevens, 2015).

When there is critical thinking in an organization, teamwork, cohesive thinking, and productivity increases amongst the employees (Reed, 2018). Facione (2015) gave a "5 Step Critical Thinking General Problem Solving Process" (p. 28) that is used with critical thinking. The process is "IDEAS" (p. 28) which means to identify the problem, determine, enumerate, assess, and scrutinize. Facione (2015) stated that after we identify the problem then we have to determine the relevant information. The next steps after determining the relevant information is to enumerate options then assess the situation. The last step is to scrutinize the process (Facione, 2015). This process is the basic for improving the way we think, to solve problems, and to arrive at solutions that will significantly benefit the organization. These five steps can align with Bloom's Taxonomy in the next module.





### Module 1 References

Facione, P. A. (2014). Critical thinking: What it is and why it counts. *Insight Assessment*.

Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251303244>

Huff, P. L. (2014). The goal project: A group assignment to encourage creative thinking, leadership abilities and communication skills. *Accounting Education: An International Journal*, 23(6), 582-594. doi:10.1080/09639284.2014.97419

Montag-Smit, T., & Maertz, C. P. Jr. (2017). Searching outside the box in creating problem: The role of creative thinking skills and domain knowledge. *Journal of Business Research*, 81, 1-10. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.07.021

Morrison, R. (2017). Teaching toward the telos of critical thinking: genre in business thinking. *Business and Professional Communications Quarterly*, 80(4), 460-472. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329490617691967>

Reed, L. (2018, January 8). Building critical thinking skills to solve problems at work. Business.com. Retrieved from <https://www.business.com/articles/building-critical-thinking-skills-at-work/>

Radovic, Z. (2016, December 5). Creative thinking – an essential skill for the 21st century [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://inkbotdesign.com/creative-thinking/>

Schaefer, T. F., & Stevens, J. S. (2016). Using rubrics to assess accounting learning goals achievement. *Issues in Accounting Education*, 31(1), 17-28. doi:10.2308/iace-51261

Sousa, M. J., & Wilks, D. (2018). Sustainable skills for the world of work in the digital age. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 35, 399-405. doi:10.1002/sres.2540

The Peak Performance Center. (2017). Critical thinking vs. creative thinking. Retrieved from <http://thepeakperformancecenter.com/educational-learning/thinking/critical-/critical-thinking-vs-creative-thinking/>

Wang, X., & Zheng, H. (2016). Reasoning critical thinking: is it born or made? *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(6), 1323-1331. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0606.25>

## MODULE 2:

### Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a Compass to Critical Thinking

By: Hannah Gordon

"He who learns but  
does not think, is  
lost! He who thinks  
but does not learn is  
in great danger.."  
-Confucius

Image: fotosearch.com



Hernandez, E. (2019). "Title page, Module 2: The CHAMP Model." JPEG file

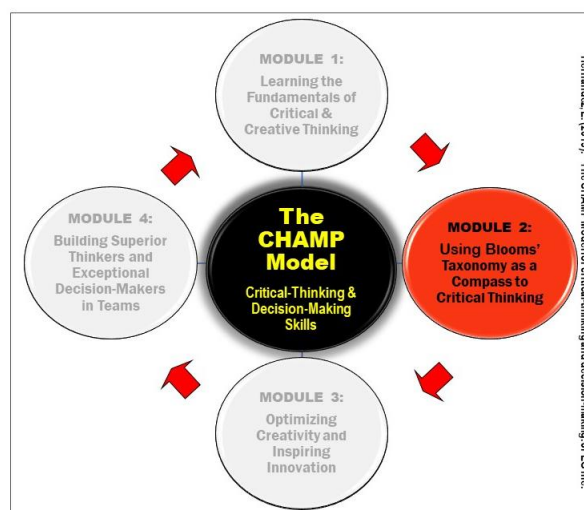
## Module 2 Introduction

We would all love to think of ourselves as good problem solvers. While as a species, humans are naturally inclined to solve issues as a survival mechanism, it does not make all of us Sherlock Holmes. Solving problems, whether personal or professional, is an evolving process that can be taught, practiced, and improved upon. Your job as an employee is to solve problems efficiently and strategically for the advancement of yourself as well as your organization. To do this, we need to step back and assess our current levels of critical and creative thinking. In today's working world, organizations must balance the continuous shift of the economy, technology, and available resources. While most businesses self-report high levels of leadership within their organizations, they still struggle with maintaining levels of innovation and motivation within their workforce (Haniya, 2017).

Businesses need employees who are flexible, inventive, and capable of handling an ever-fluctuating environment (Dwyer, Hogan, & Stewart, 2014). As you read in Module 1, critical thinking is a complex process where using purposeful, metacognitive practices allows an individual to assess current situations, evaluate potential resolutions, and produce better, more logical solutions (Dwyer et al., 2014).

Additionally, practicing critical thinking has been shown to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills. Similarly, creative thinking promotes an individual's ability to be flexible, work in teams, and brainstorm numerous solutions

to a problem. It allows individuals to view situations from multiple points of view in order to



**Figure 2.1.** Module 2 of The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making.

breakdown the problem into its different components and have frame of reference (Rawlinson, 2017). Therefore, it is paramount to the successful evolution of an organization that employees develop and practice critical and creative thinking skills as a technique for increasing innovation and leadership qualities. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, this module will focus on using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide for improving these qualities.

### **Bloom's Taxonomy: From the Student Classroom, to the Business Office**

Now that we have established the *why* to developing our critical and creative thinking skills, our focus in this module shifts to *how* we can take theory and turn it into real-world practice. Our objective is simply this: using Bloom's Taxonomy, employees will be able to reflect on their current level(s) of critical and creative thinking and formulate a strategic plan to improve. Published by Benjamin Bloom, Max Englehart, Edward Furst, Walter Hill, and David Krathwohl in 1956, Bloom's Taxonomy was initially developed to categorize the different levels of cognitive functions (McDaniel, 2018). The creators observed that not all tasks require the same amount intellect or attention. For instance, memorizing the definitions of twenty vocabulary words does not require the same amount of cognitive involvement as creating a song or video to teach those same vocabulary words to someone else.

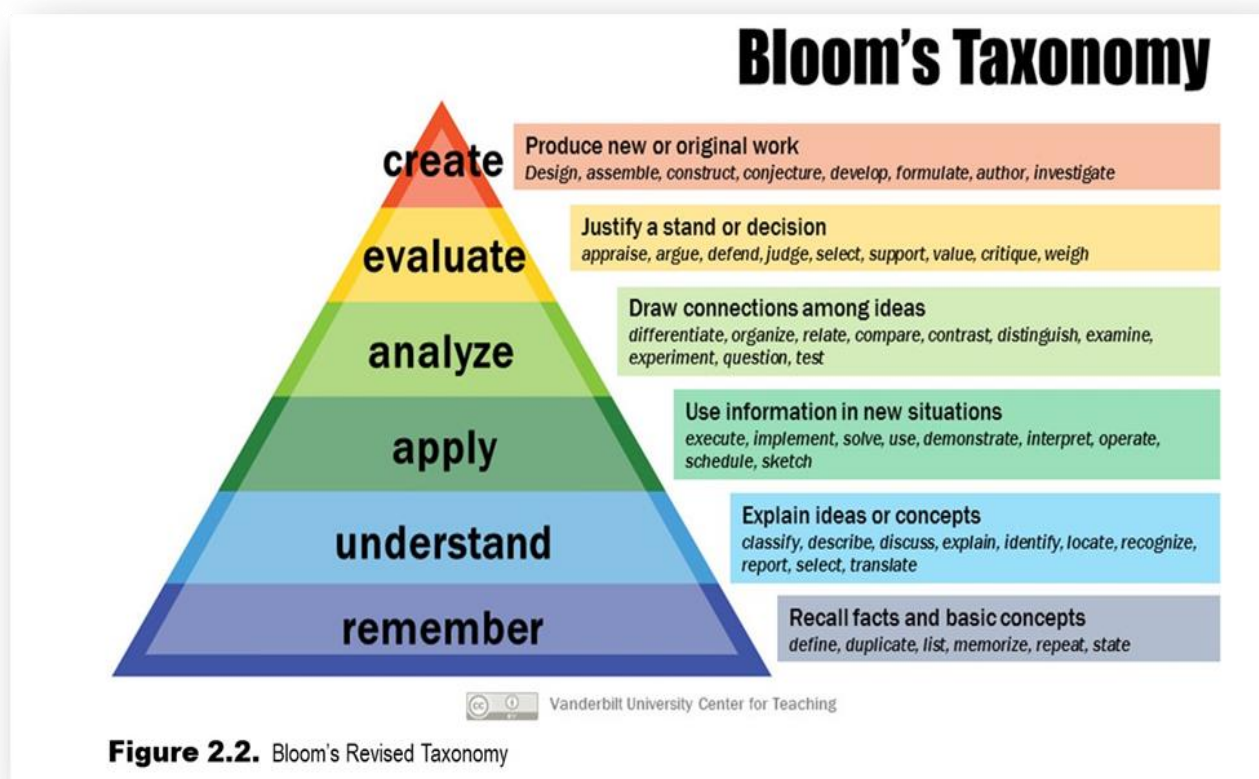
Therefore, Bloom and the other collaborators composed a hierarchical framework with the following six levels of skills: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This framework has been used by educators for decades as a basis for creating learning activities. The framework's accompanying verbs lists makes it simple for teachers to generate specific learning objectives that require different levels of cognitive function. The idea is that the higher the student(s) is working in the hierarchy, the more they are better able to understand the information. In 2001, Bloom's Taxonomy was revised. A group, which consisted

of researchers, psychologists, and educational theorists gave the framework a makeover in order to express the more dynamic approach to which people receive and use information.

The revised version, as seen in Figure 2.2 consists of the following tiers: Remember, Understand, Classify, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. So how does someone like yourself, who may or may not have heard of Bloom's Taxonomy, use it? The goal of this module is not for you to use Bloom's as a step-by-step guide. Instead, think of it as a resource to help you determine best practices for making personal and professional improvements. Let us face it, we all have strengths and weaknesses in our professional lives. Rather than simply accepting our weaknesses, the creators of this handbook firmly believe in giving employees the power and motivation to make real and lasting changes. Adams (2015) suggested that organizations assist employees with using Bloom's to create professional objectives that focus on improving capabilities. The verbs associated with each tier can help outline these objectives and turn them into achievable behaviors. Before going further into how you will use Bloom's Taxonomy as a goal-builder, we need to first emphasize the importance of having an open mind. This can be broken down further into having a growth or fixed mindset. Individuals with a growth mindset firmly believe that they can attain and build skills through practice, reflection, use of resources and collaboration, while individuals with a fixed mindset believe that skills are more innate and cannot be developed further (Dweck, 2016).

Now, this is not to say that people are all growth, or all fixed in their mindsets; we all have a bit of both growth and fixed mindset towards different situations. The key is to understand where on the mindset scale we are and fundamentally change the way we attack tasks and everyday circumstances. With that being said, employees with a growth mindset are more likely to be engaged at work as well as eager to develop themselves personally and

professionally (Caniëls, Semeijn, and Renders, 2018). So how do we go about changing our mindsets? According to Cannon and Feinstein (2014), attaining the ability to manipulate knowledge needs to be done dynamically, or through experience. We cannot expect to flip on a switch and have a growth mindset. You must be okay with applying strategies in real-world situation, potentially having setbacks, and learning from those setbacks in order to analyze what could have been done better.






### Do you have a “Can Do” Attitude?

As previously mentioned, the organizers of this handbook believe that in order to have employees who are proactive, goal-oriented problems solvers, they must have a positive attitude. For this reason, the chart below focuses on what actions you can do, as opposed to ones you may be lacking. Use the “Can Do” chart in Figure 2.3 as a guide for evaluating your own critical and

creative thinking skills. Each of Bloom's Tiers (from the revised version) are listed on the left side of the cart, followed by some of the verbs associated with those tiers. You will then see a list of "Can Do" indicators listed for both critical and creative thinking. You will notice a lack of indicators for creative thinking for the first three tiers. This is purposeful to represent the higher order thinking skills it takes to be a creative thinker. Keep in mind that this resource represents only one tool you can use on your path to improve critical and creative thinking. To start, you must first ask a question: "What do I want to accomplish?" Use your answer as a goal. The more specific your goal, the better you will be able to map out a plan for improvement. From this question, you, or your team will identify current strengths and weaknesses using the resources listed in Module 1. The Module 1 quizzes are designed to assess your current levels of critical and creative thinking. Use them as a starting point for evaluating and monitoring your progress. Additionally, this handbook includes a reflection sheet (Figure 2.4) for you to use as a self-monitoring tool. It is designed to help you organize information about current or upcoming projects and assess which critical and creative thinking skills will be needed for it. This reflection sheet is then used after a project is finished to assess the strengths and weakness of the project and how your skills attributed to that outcome. Most importantly, the tool asks what can be improved in the future. This is probably the most crucial aspect to focus on because it creates that growth mindset where you are more likely to take any weak points and aim to improve them in the future.



Tier	Associated Terms	Can Do Indicators Critical Thinking	Can Do Indicators Creative Thinking
Remember	Define Repeat Tell Memorize State	<b>I Can</b> Recite organizational policies, procedures, and statistics. <b>I Can</b> State the organization's mission, vision, and values. <b>I Can</b> Name problems in my organization.	
Understand	Classify Describe Discuss Identify Explain	<b>I Can</b> Explain how the organization operates. <b>I Can</b> Identify the goals as they relate to my position, the mission, and the vision. <b>I Can</b> Describe the culture of the organization.	
Apply	Use Solve Implement Interpret Operate	<b>I Can</b> Implement new strategies given to me by the organization. <b>I Can</b> Use resources to help find solutions. <b>I Can</b> Operate the various technology used in the organization.	
Analyze	Organize Compare Examine Question Test	<b>I Can</b> Examine my annual evaluations and use them to make improvements. <b>I Can</b> Compare alternative solutions to a problem. <b>I Can</b> Organize my daily tasks as a form of triage.	<b>I Can</b> Organize my thoughts using flexible-thinking. <b>I Can</b> Calculate and take risks.
Evaluate	Appraise Argue Defend Critique Support	<b>I Can</b> Defend my decisions and my actions. <b>I Can</b> Appraise the effectiveness of my contributions to the organization. <b>I Can</b> Critique myself.	<b>I Can</b> Visualize outcomes of multiple scenarios. <b>I Can</b> Critique my work and the work of others from multiple points of view.
Create	Formulate Investigate Design Author Develop	<b>I Can</b> Develop my own improvement plan. <b>I Can</b> Formulate, implement, and monitor a strategic plan to make improvements in my organization. <b>I Can</b> Design policies and procedures for my organization based on current data and align it with the mission and vision.	

Gordon, H. (2019). "Bloom's Taxonomy "Can Do" Indicators for Assessing Critical and Creative Thinking Skills." JPEG file.

**Figure 2.3.** Bloom's Taxonomy "Can Do" Indicators for Assessing Critical and Creative Thinking Skills

<p>Project Name:</p> <p>Individual/Team (Highlight One)</p>
<p><b>Pre-Project Questions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the goals for this project?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>What areas, based on the resources in Module 1, need to be worked on?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>Using the Bloom's Taxonomy "Can Do" Indicators, create an objective for this project.  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>What resources will you or your team use to help you work on these areas?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> </ol> <p><b>Post-Project Questions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflecting on the outcome of your project, What successes did you see?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>Weaknesses?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>How could this project have been improved?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> <li>Did you feel that you were better able to work with the information in your project using the indicators in the "Can Do" chart? Why/Why not?  <hr/> <hr/> </li> </ol>

Gordon, H. (2019). "Employee Progress Monitoring Tool." JPEG file.

**Figure 2.4.** Employee Progress Monitoring Tool.

## **Module 2 Closing Remarks**

Like a compass, it is best to think of Bloom's Taxonomy as a continuous guide rather than a finite series of steps. Tiers in Bloom's can be used at varying degrees, and situations may not always call for the highest levels of cognitive function. By having a more thorough understanding of not only Bloom's Taxonomy, but also of your own critical and creative thinking skills, you are more apt to assess which levels are appropriate in any given situation, and which skills you will need to practice. Keep in mind that your goal after reading this handbook is not only to have increased your knowledge base on strategies for improving critical thinking and decision-making skills, but also to take these strategies and use them as tools for personal and professional growth. You are to apply some of these strategies, evaluate their effectiveness, and hopefully create realistic and achievable objectives that will guide you becoming a more adaptable and motivated employee. The CHAMP Model aims at providing you with a pathway to achieving exactly that. In the following modules, you will how to optimize creativity and innovation as well as enhance decision-making skills.

## Module 2 References

- Adams N. E. (2015). Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning objectives. *Journal of the Medical Library Association : JMLA*, 103(3), 152-3. doi:10.3163/1536-5050.103.3.010
- Caniëls, M. C., Semeijn, J. H., & Renders, I. H. (2018). Mind the mindset! The interaction of proactive personality, transformational leadership and growth mindset for engagement at work. *Career Development International*, 23(1), 48-66.
- Cannon, H. M., & Feinstein, A. H. (2014). Bloom beyond Bloom: Using the revised taxonomy to develop experiential learning strategies. In *Developments in Business Simulation and Experiential Learning: Proceedings of the Annual ABSEL conference* (Vol. 32).
- Dweck, C. (2016). What having a “growth mindset” actually means. *Harvard Business Review*, 13.
- Dwyer, C. P., Hogan, M. J., & Stewart, I. (2014). An integrated critical thinking framework for the 21st century. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 12, 43-52.  
doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2013.12.004
- Haniya, S. (2017). Strategic leadership development: simplified with Bloom’s taxonomy, Industrial and Commercial Training. Vol. 49 Issue: 1, pp.40-47. doi.org/10.1108/ICT-08-2016-0056
- McDaniel, R. (2018). Bloom's Taxonomy. Retrieved from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>
- Rawlinson, J. G. (2017). *Creative thinking and brainstorming*. Routledge.
- Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. (2019). Bloom’s Taxonomy. Retrieved from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>

# **MODULE 3:**

## **Optimizing Creativity and Inspiring Innovation**

**By: Brittney Coe**

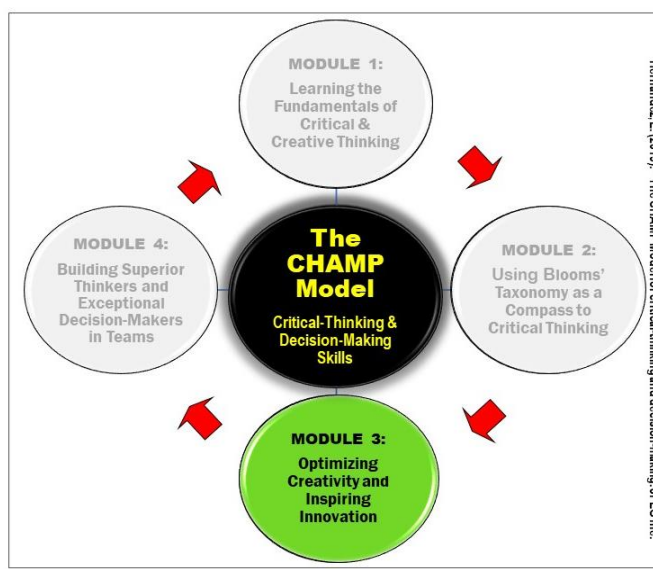
"Logic will take you  
from A to B.  
Imagination will take  
you everywhere."  
-Albert Einstein



### Module 3 Introduction

Each day comes with new and different challenges whether in your personal or professional life. Creative thinking is a skill that can be developed in order to help solve a problem or make a decision. Progress comes from creativity. Creative thinking involves looking at problems from a fresh point of view and developing innovative ways to find a solution.

Continuing the CHAMP Model, the goal of this section is to optimize creativity and inspire innovation (see Figure 3.1). You will become more aware of how to develop your creativity and innovation to use to make decisions and solve problems in any organization. The previous modules, focusing on critical thinking and Bloom's Taxonomy, have given you a foundation upon which you and your team can begin to use these powerful tools to take your organization to the next level. These skills can be applied to everyday life and with some patience and practice, you might just find yourself approaching obstacles from a different angle as you unlock your creative potential.



**Figure 3.1.** Module 3 of The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making.

### Psychological Mindedness


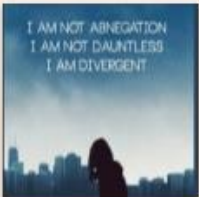

In order to be creative you need to open your mind. Psychological mindedness (PM) is a trait that positively correlates with creativity (LeBoutillier & Barry, 2018). This is your ability to evaluate yourself and practice self-reflection. Insight and introspection are the results of using these 'centering' skills effectively. It is a journey worth the effort to critically look at your own words and actions and give an honest evaluation. Self-confidence and self-acceptance are



significant personality traits of someone with PM. Having an open mind to new experiences and different points of view can intensify how well you relate to others as you accept and support their ideas. When you become more aware of yourself and of others, creativity increases and your perception can change in a positive way.

### Creative Thinking

Research of PM by LeBoutillier and Barry (2018) recognized three types of thinking linked to creativity: imagery based creativity, divergent thinking skills, and the ability to find solutions to distant semantic relations (see Figure 3.2 for more information and resources on

Types of Creative Thinking			
Type	Definition	Examples	Train Your Brain
<b>Imagery Based Creativity</b> 	Creating mental images in order to preserve, examine, or change a feeling or an issue	See it in your mind's eye  Vision board	Meditation Visualize the Goal Create a Mantra
<b>Resources to improve your Visualizing Skills (Search the internet for these impactful sources):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">R. Sasson: Success Consciousness: Creative Visualization &amp; Your Daily Tasks Templates &amp; More</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jack Canfield Maximizing your Potential: Visualize and Affirm your Desired Outcomes Step-by-Step Guide</a></li> </ul>			
<b>Divergent Thinking</b> 	Generating ideas within the context of more than one solution	Brainstorming  Mind Mapping  Analyze the topic from broad to specific	Take Risks Make Mistakes Try Again Ask Questions Challenge Answers
<b>Resources to improve your Divergent Skills (Search the internet for these impactful sources):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Prodigy: Teaching Convergent and Divergent Thinking</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">N. Wignall: Divergent Thinking, The Mental Muscle Behind Consistent Creativity [The Flow of Thought]</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">InformED: 30 Ways to Inspire Divergent Thinking</a></li> </ul>			
<b>Distant Semantic Contacts</b> 	Solving three word associates by finding the a word that relates to all words	How are the words shower, read, and shoulder related? (solution: cold)	Word Associations Word Ladders
<b>Resources to improve your Word Association Skills (Search the internet for these impactful sources):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Icebreaker: Word Association Exercise</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Human Brain Cloud: Massive Multiplayer Word Association Game</a></li> </ul>			

Coe, B. (2019). "Types of creative thinking: Definitions, examples, and training resources." JPEG file.

**Figure 3.2.** Types of creative thinking and resources to foster creative thinking.

creative thinking). Creative potential can be tapped through mindful development of these skills and the more you practice the better you will become. According to Sun et al. (2016), creativity training can restructure both the function and construction of the brain. There are several ways that you can train your brain to become stronger in these areas. *Peak* is one among many applications that can be purchased on your smartphone to use to boost brainpower. It was developed under the direction of neuroscientists in the form of games to challenge cognitive skills in the areas of language, problem solving, memory, focus, mental agility, emotion, and coordination. Progress is tracked and recorded on a brain map, which provides information on achieved levels and how your statistics compare to other users in different age groups. The games are engaging and can be played while standing in line at the store or while taking a brain break from a mentally exhausting task.

### **Creative Visualization**

Imagery is a powerful technique that can yield tangible results if it is done consistently and mindfully. Creative visualization is the equivalent of weight training for your physical body. When you picture yourself doing something in your mind you are creating neural pathways and muscle memory through mental rehearsal. These pathways become stronger and more precise from each practice (Heijligers, n.d.). It is as simple as closing your eyes and picturing an outcome in your mind. Use as many of your senses as you can to enhance the effect. Can you hear it, smell it, taste it, feel it, and see it? Visualizing before you fall asleep and just as you wake up can help manifest an idea or desire. Advanced technology has made it possible to create virtual reality visualizations that can be shared among a team of doctors performing a life-saving surgery or a classroom of students learning about the planets in our solar system. Visualization can be used among a team of professionals to create a new product or make a decision.



Visualizations can be represented through a mock-up of an idea or solution either on paper or by developing a 3-D prototype. Creating this type of visual is highly effective because you can test it in different situations and gain real insight into the possibilities that it holds. More abstract ideas can be visualized using role-play by acting out a scenario, storyboards, or storytelling (Carlgren, Rauth, & Elmquist, 2016).

### **Divergent Thinking**

Creativity and innovation are intensified by the ability to come up with many different solutions for the same problem. Divergent thinking is the thought process used to facilitate this method of creativity. These explorations into the various aspects of a problem or issue are best achieved in a supportive environment where time is given to encourage creative thinking. Divergent thinkers take practical risks, are given opportunities to make mistakes, and try again in a different way when they fail. Mistakes should be seen as a positive rather than a negative because they are nothing more than an opportunity to improve and make necessary changes to meet the goal. Asking questions and challenging the answers is a vital aspect in this way of thinking. Creative thinking improves when you can look at the big picture as well as each working part individually (Allen, Lewis, & Fleming, 2017).

Making connections among ideas, critically evaluating options, and formulating new ideas are the three highest cognitive skills in Bloom's Taxonomy. Awareness that these skills can be developed and enhanced puts your team at a creative advantage.

### **Design Thinking as a Creative Framework**

Design thinking (DT) is creative framework that can be used to invent a new product, make a decision, or solve a problem. Teams who use DT are made up of imaginative and innovative personalities. Carlgren, Rauth, and Elmquist (2016) referred to five themes of DT as a

result of their research of its theory and practice: User Focus, Problem Framing, Visualization, Experimentation, and Diversity. Due to the abstract nature of the concepts involved in DT, it is challenging to quantify the results of implementation. DT does not lend itself to step-by-step instructions but rather a set of guidelines to work within which are made relevant based on the task. Designing the way your team approaches a new problem requires a combination of critical thinking skills and creativity.

### **User Focus**

Effective organizations know what the users of their services or products want. It takes time to establish relationships with customers. Technology has made it easier to conduct virtual business; however, the power of personal connection should not be forgotten. Organizations who deliver their services with attention to their users make an effort to build rapport with patrons through face-to-face interactions. Curiosity about their lives using empathy and respect of differences will give insight into how to serve their needs. Changing and expanding goods and services to meet user needs is the foundation of any successful business. Ethnographic research, casual meetings with customers, focus groups, and anecdotal recordings are a few methods of finding out more about your customers (Carlgren et al., 2016).

### **Problem Framing**

Problem framing allows you to look at an issue from a different point of reference and gain a wider view of the possibilities of solutions. Reframing increases creativity with a different understanding of the way something will work. When you change the way you look at something you can also change the way you feel about it. Approaching a decision from the angle of the customer or your employees could ultimately make you feel differently about the bottom line of making a profit. Different perspectives could include meaning (this could also mean...), context

(this would also work with...), learning (This helped us learn that...), humor (this is funny because...), points of view (if I were another person involved I would see it as...), and silver lining (on the bright side we figured out...). Reframing is a useful tool that can be used to make positive changes within the organization (McGuinness, n.d.).

## Diversity

Assembling a team capable of collaboration among members with diverse personalities, backgrounds, and experience increases the possibilities of achievement using critical thinking and creativity. You will learn techniques to build synergy among your team in the next section, which introduces Module 4 of the CHAMP Model: Building Superior Thinkers and Exceptional Decision-Makers in Teams.

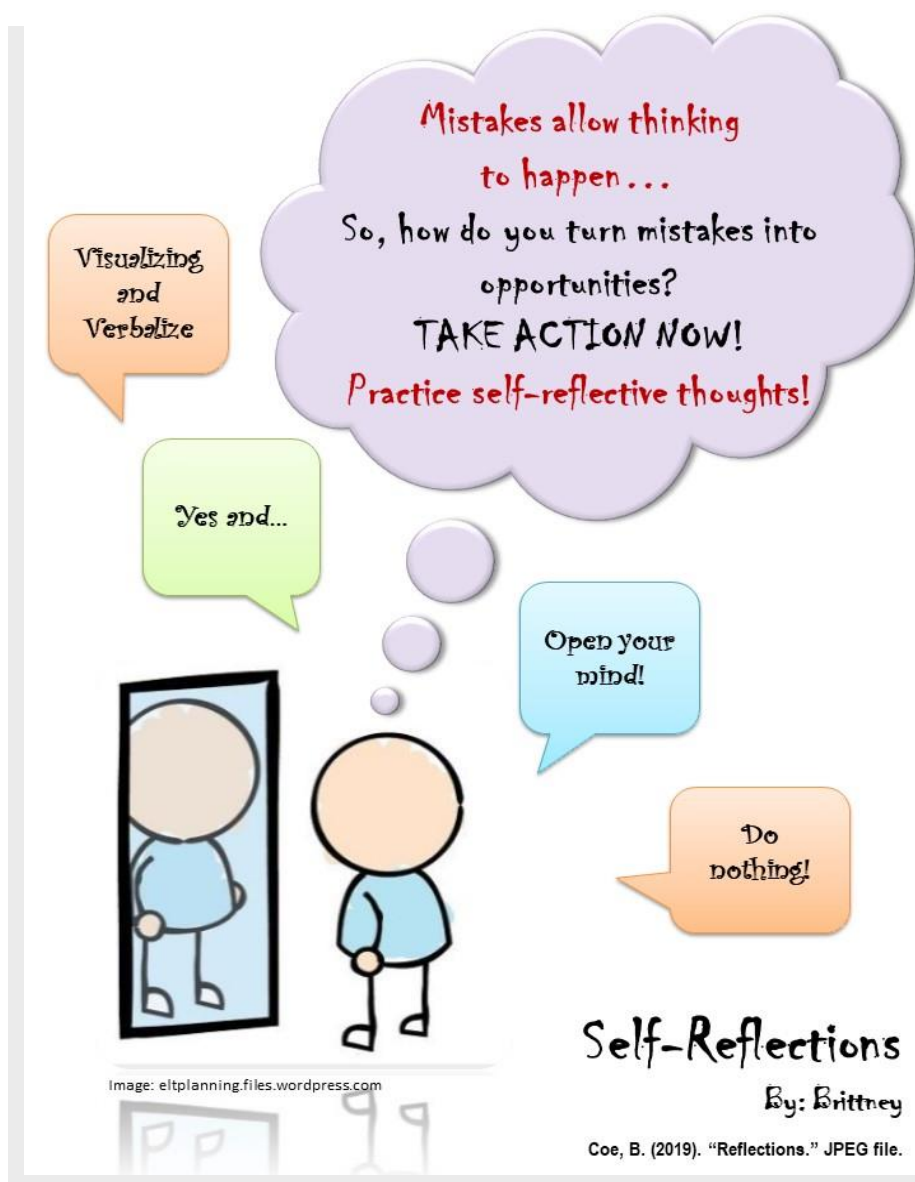
A diverse team provides different perspectives, attitudes, and feedback. Leadership of a diverse team requires democracy, patience, and understanding of cultural norms in order to make sure that everyone has a voice. It is important to have team members with different levels of experience, however this can be a challenge when it comes to establishing respect among the seasoned and rookie members. Leaders need to establish the importance of both experience and fresh perspectives when it comes to working together for a common goal (Carlgren et al., 2016).



### Module 3 Closing Remarks

Creativity and innovation come naturally for some while others need to develop their skills in this area. The bottom line is that it is possible to enhance your creative skill set if you have the right mindset. Listening to inspirational music, drawing, taking a walk, or spending quiet time in the beauty of nature can inspire you to open your mind and tap into your creative

potential. The next time you have are stuck and having difficulty making a decision, try doing nothing or switch to a preferred mindless activity (Patel, 2017). Some may refer to it as task avoidance but this incubation period is actually helping you think through your decision in your subconscious. When you return to work you will find that you have a new perspective, which will help solve the problem.



### Module 3 References

- Allen, C., Lewis, M. A., & Fleming, D. (2017, March). *Paint this picture: Infusing creativity through divergent thinking across all content areas*. Paper presented at the National Youth-at-Risk Conference, Savannah, GA. Abstract retrieved from [https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/nyar\\_savannah/2017/2017/35/](https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/nyar_savannah/2017/2017/35/)
- Carlgren, L., Rauth, I., & Elmquist, M. (2016). Framing Design Thinking: The Concept in Idea and Enactment. *Creativity & Innovation Management*, 25(1), 38–57. <https://doi-org.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/10.1111/caim.12153>
- Heijligers, H. (n.d.). Creative Visualization: 29 reasons why you should visualize your goals. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://smartleadershiput.com/visualization/creative-visualization/>
- LeBoutillier, N., & Barry, R. (2018). Psychological mindedness, personality and creative cognition. *Creativity Research Journal*, 30(1), 78-84. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/docview/2023999908?accountid=6579>
- McGuinness, M. (n.d.). Lesson 5: The Four Most Powerful Types of Creative Thinking. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://lateralaction.com/creative-thinking/>
- Patel, D. (2017). Six Proven Ways to Increase your Creativity [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/deeppatel/2017/07/30/6-proven-ways-to-increase-your-creativity/#7a34be634295>
- Sun, J., Chen, Q., Zhang, Q., Li, Y., Li, H., Wei, D., & Qiu, J. (2016). Training your brain to be more creative: brain functional and structural changes induced by divergent thinking training. *Human Brain Mapping*, 37(10), 3375-3387.

## **MODULE 4:**

### **Building Superior Thinkers and Exceptional Decision-Makers in Teams**

**By: Elizabeth Hernandez**

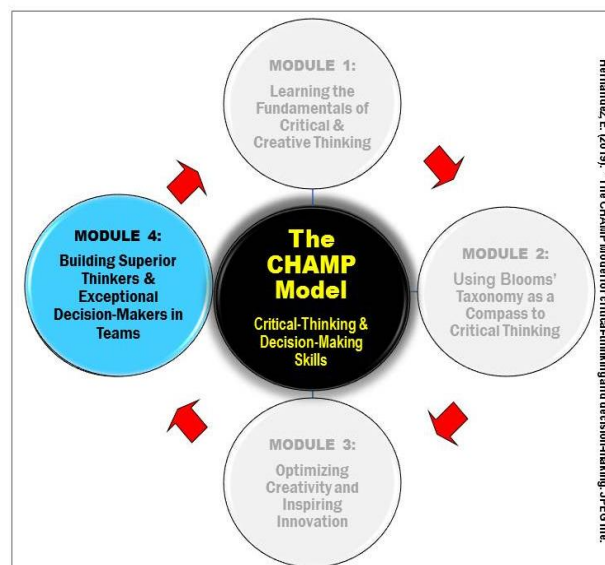
"If I have seen further  
than others, it is by  
standing upon the  
shoulders of giants."  
-Isaac Newton



## Module 4 Introduction

Building teams that deliver superior results depend on members' capabilities to be effective collaborators, communicators, contributors, and relators. These aptitudes help create synergy and cohesiveness within teams that in turn inspire critical, creative, and higher-order thinking. By having taken a journey through the top three modules of the CHAMP Model, your employees should be exhibiting elevated levels of analytical aptitudes, intellectual ingenuity, and emotional intelligence. This progressive development prepares individual workers to become empowered thinkers and decision-makers. Subsequently, having learned the fundamentals of moving from learning, understanding, and retaining to synthesizing, applying, and innovating knowledge into patterns of design thinking, your employees, now, will navigate through the last phase of our training plan: Module 4-Building Superior Thinkers and Exceptional Decision-Makers in Teams (see Figure 4.1). Here, operative personnel will learn how to become *change* catalysts as members of a *think-tank* community.

This section introduces you to advanced and accelerated training systems to build staff's value while honing efficiency, engagement, agility, and collaboration of teams at work. The tactics shared under this module will revolutionize the way you as a leader perceive your workers' role within the organization. Focusing specifically on bringing individual employees to form dynamic teams within the workplace, the following portion (Module 4) of the CHAMP Model training process brings an explosive closure to this comprehensive theoretical and practical coaching handbook.



**Figure 4.1.** Module 4 of The CHAMP Model for Critical-Thinking and Decision-Making.

Next, as a leader, you will learn effective methods of enacting impactful training activities to build high-powered, forward-thinking work teams; to select the right staff candidate to serve as a team member; and to identify emerging leaders who exhibit key aptitudes acquired under Module 1 through Module 3 of this manual. The initiatives discussed under this section have been formulated applying theories of organizational development, learning, and behavior as well as human resources development and learning models. Some of the practical theories used to support the activities developed in this Module 4 include *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (coined by Abraham Maslow in 1943), *Strengths-Based Approach Theory* (coined by Weick, Rapp, Sullivan, & Kishardt in 1989), and *Tuckman's Stages of Team Development* (coined by Bruce Tuckman in 1965).

Before you begin training your employees on the team building strategies provided under this section, as a leader, you must prepare the base for a successful employees' training learning experience.

### **Leaders Prepare and Plan Training Program**

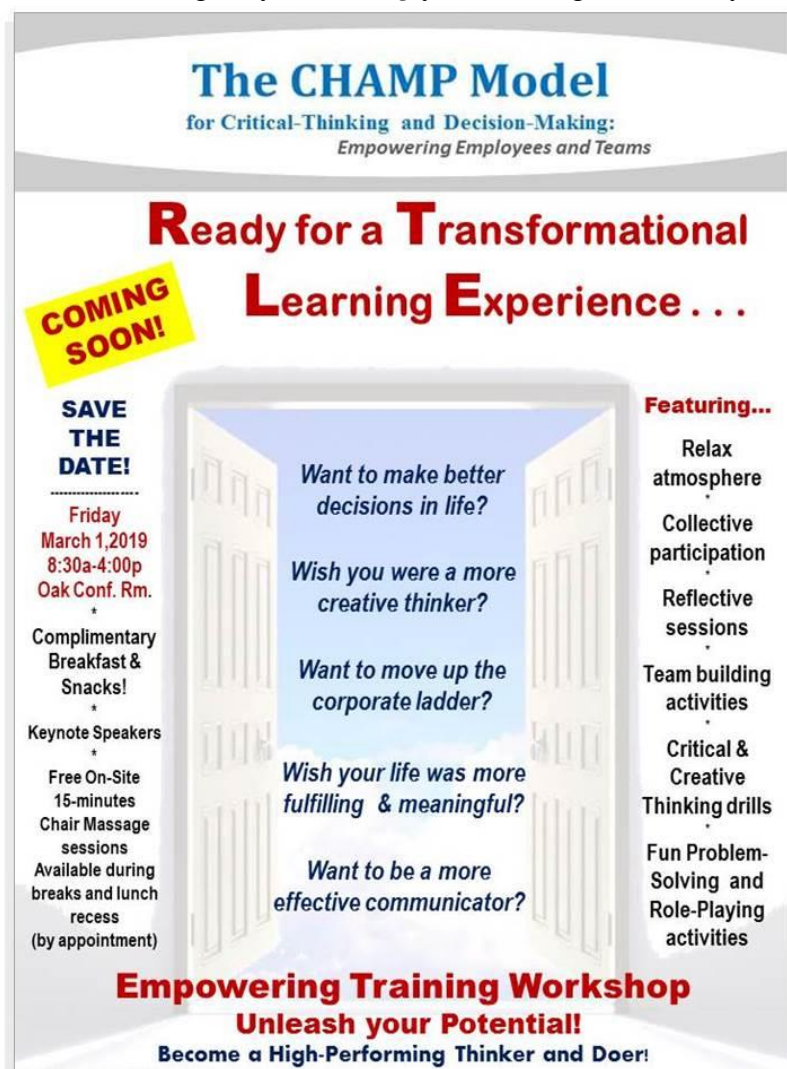
Knowing how to present a powerful and persuasive sales-pitch that catches employees' attention and gets them to *buy in* to your training program is vital to the success of the business and its HR training and development initiatives. Especially if you as a leader intend to introduce the formation of work teams, for instance, to brainstorm solutions on a detrimental strategic issue facing the company (Boer, 2013; Senay, Albarracin, & Noguchi, 2010). To ensure staff's smooth transition from working independently to working interdependently, you must introduce a training platform that is attractive enough to engage employees' enthusiasm and interest while preparing them to collaborate and to perform in a group setting. Simultaneously, you want to convey the personal benefits employees will gain from attending this professional coaching



program. With this in mind, let us get started in preparing the training terrain for employees as to create momentum, inspiration, and interest in what will become the new status quo for getting the work done, collectively (Boer, 2013; Senay et al., 2010).

### Creating a Powerful Training Sales-Pitch to Engage Employees

Begin by *marketing* your training session to your employees in order to create



Hernandez, E. (2019). "Engaging employees: Sales-pitch flyer." JPEG file.

**Figure 4.2.** Engaging employees: Sales-Pitch Flyer

Hence, employees will be empowered to ponder on their search for meaning and purpose in relation to life, work, and relationships. Senay, Albarracin, and Noguchi (2010) revealed that self-reflective thinking (also referred to as self-talk) when triggered by persuasive approaches of

anticipation, excitement, and engagement. Utilize sources such as internal email blasts, technological platforms, staff meetings, and bulletin boards in visible areas to *advertise* the training. Create appealing flyers and emails using *story-telling* and *self-reflective hook* techniques to get the attention of your staff and *hook* them emotionally (see Figure 4.2). This approach promotes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that serves as drivers of introspection and extrospection (Boer, 2013; Senay et al., 2010).

communication (such as active-voice statements and visual stimuli) entice the mind to elevate its cognitive thinking process and begin to create new paradigms. This activity motivates changes in behavior that align our actions (intentions) with our renewed thought patterns. Thus, generate momentum and engage employees through igniting visuals such as the one seen in Figure 4.2.

### **Leaders Execute Training Program**

#### **Training Employees and Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers and Doers!**

Now, get ready to deliver an engaging and persuasive training session that will help your staff find their unique gifts, potential, and purpose and show them how to integrate those attributes into the team with respect and emotional quotient while establishing positive influence and commitment to their group. Here, you will introduce staff to existing teams or will create a new team. The focus is to empower each member and to share ownership of problem-solving and decision-making processes (Winsborough & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2017). As a leader, you should concentrate on inspiring, motivating, and mentoring your employees to provoke superior levels of performance as individuals and team members. This team expectation requires members' full attention to critical and creative thinking while tapping on their ability to communicate effectively and work harmoniously with one another. At the end, staff will bond and build lasting and meaningful relationships within teams and among members (Kaifi & Noori, 2011; Veyrat, 2017; Winsborough & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2017; Wroblewski, 2018).

This Module 4 in the CHAMP Model stems from the principles of the *Strengths-Based Approach Theory* (coined in 1989 by Weick, Rapp, Sullivan, & Kishardt). The theory sustains that intervention initiatives should focus on strengths, capabilities, resources, and potential of systems and deviate from deficit-based views (Hammond, 2010). Also referred to as *strengths perspective*, this theory adapts to contemporary changes in society providing an alternative look

at life, others, and ourselves in a more positive way. By shifting mental models from negative to positive and from problems to solutions, *strengths perspectives* create in us resilience and autonomy (Hammond, 2010). Moreover, it empowers us to feel in control of our emotions, surroundings, and circumstances building our self-esteem and courage to stand for our beliefs while instilling in us respect towards others opinions. This behavioral modification helps us communicate better and build healthier relationships based on trust while finding common grounds for collective dialogue and decision-making (Hammond, 2010).

#### **Empowering Training Activities for Teams: Module 4**

Hammond (2010) defined the basis of *strengths perspective theory* as approaching any assignment, responsibility, and issue with an attitude of functionality instead of dysfunctionality or looking at the negative with a positive mindset to identifying opportunities for improvement. Dr. Hammond added that an approach of strengths perspective allows us to contribute richer, more dynamic viewpoints and ideas in the process of decision-making while planning for risks and capitalizing on opportunities and strengths. In turn, we are able to impart valuable and healthy alternatives to brainstorm sessions and build connections with those around us through a more empathetic stance. Other members will begin looking at us as positive influencers of change opening the pathway of communication and collaboration to work interactively as a team.


The following training strategies stem from *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* (coined by Abraham Maslow in 1943), *Strengths-Based Approach Theory* (coined in 1989 by Weick, Rapp, Sullivan, & Kishardt), and *Tuckman's Stages of Team Development* (coined by Bruce Tuckman in 1965). Now, it is time to formulate training exercises that provide active learning activities. Let us dive into these transformational training guides proven to ignite, inspire, and engage employees and teams.

**How to Assemble a Winning Team!** Learning how to select the right candidate to form a team is crucial for the success and enrichment of the organization as a whole. Begin your training by using the *simple steps* shown in Figure 4.3 to introduce team formation to your employees.

**HOW TO ASSEMBLE A WINNING WORK TEAM!**  
 There are times when our supervisor may tasked us with the responsibility of assembling a work team among peers to take on solving a problem or coming up with ideas to resolve a conflict. While the task may seem complex, and at times it is, peers can use the following three easy steps as a guide to get started on coming together as an effective team.

**PRACTICE EXERCISE:**  
 In a 30-minutes exercise (depending on the size of your training class), ask participants to form small groups of 3-5 members each and name their team. Then, have each team work on crafting a *winning work team* by completing steps 1 through 3. At the end of the exercise, have each team share and discuss their experience (Hernandez, 2019).

STEP	DESCRIPTION
1	Identify the type of team and team members you need depending on the type of issue at hand. The categories of teams include: Multi-functional (i.e., risk management committees), Troubleshooting (i.e., testing new IT software prototype), Self-Managed (i.e., networks), Project (i.e., product design champions), and Task-Force (i.e., problem-solving strategic team) (Veyrat, 2017). Pinpoint special traits needed from participants and establish why these are essential. Vote to select a team leader who will be responsible to coordinate meetings, agendas, tasks, and be a spokesperson for the team (Hernandez, 2019).
2	Establish a clear vision, mission, and core values for the team. As a team, prepare to communicate goals, expectation, and method of reaching best decisions in order to establish rapport, trust, and openness. Doing so will show each other that you value the opinion and expertise of others. Discuss how the organization's culture is conducive to collaboration and teamwork. At the same time, establish code of conduct and ethical values that conform to the needs and diversity of team members (Hernandez, 2019).
3	Formulate strategies to build on cohesiveness and communication amongst teams and members. This effort will help those selected to join a team to transition from working independently and making decisions based on what is best for themselves to working interdependently and choosing solutions based on the common good of the whole (Hernandez, 2019).



Hernandez, E. (2019). "Fundamentals of assembling winning work teams." JPEG file.

**Figure 4.3.** Fundamentals of Assembling Winning Work Teams

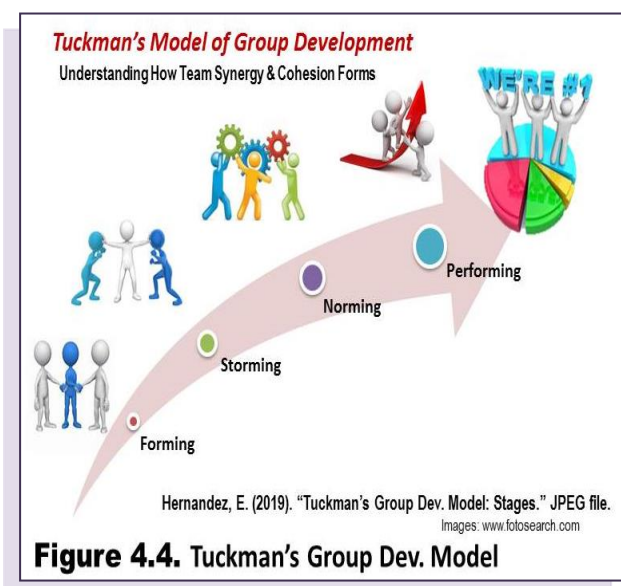
The next training learning activity focuses on teaching teams how to achieve a set of group development aims such as creating team synergy, fostering team innovation, and maximizing team creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving competencies. Aligning with this module's objectives of building superior thinkers and exceptional decision-makers in teams, I provide you with succinct, pragmatic, and effective training guidelines and exercises to

captivate the attention of attendees and encourage their individual and collective active participation.

### **Building Teams into Think-Tank Experts using *Tuckman's Model of Group***

**Development.** Helping employees understand how work teams form and function will assist in adjusting better to the transition from making decisions independently to thinking and solving problems interdependently in an efficient, effective, and cohesive fashion. DuBrin (2012) defined *group decisions* as a round-table type of activity where participants carry discussions and make final decisions collectively. Thus, you want to avoid having team members cease voicing their opinions and conform to *go with the flow* (also referred to as *groupthink*) just to avoid being criticized because they pose a different take than other members do on an issue. This phenomenon of showing agreement with others *just to fit in* debilitates the ability of members to look at ideas and issues critically thus bringing the person to think more linear over time

(DuBrin, 2012). To combat groupthink, I suggest training your employees on the principles of Tuckman's Model of Group Development (see Figure 4.4). Doing so will teach them how a group of peers with diverse expertise and cultural backgrounds work together in forming, building, and uniting a team collectively (DuBrin, 2012). In Figure 4.5, I facilitate an easy to track guideline on how team







synergy and cohesion forms. Train your employees on this model by doing roleplaying drills.



### Tuckman's Model of Group Development Learning How Team Synergy Forms

**PRACTICE EXERCISE:** In a 30-minutes exercise (depending on the size of your training class), ask teams to engage in a roleplaying drill. First, members are to switch teams except for the leader. Then, each team performs stages 1 through 4 acting out the different team behavioral phases. At the end of the exercise, have each team share, discuss, and compare their experience to that of Figure 4.3 exercise on How To Assemble Winning Teams (Hernandez, 2019).

Phase	Description
<b>Stage 1: Forming</b>  No longer Me But Us	Members come together and meet each other. They are anxious to find out what the tasks are and what their role is as a participant. Employees ask about rules and protocol they need to follow as well as group membership flow. At this stage, confusion and apprehension may arise, as each member may feel uneasy to open up to others. Formality of a group meeting controls the interaction of members and cordiality is at the forefront as employees begin to get acquainted with one another (Hernandez, 2019).
<b>Stage 2: Storming</b> Conflict Resolution Oriented/ Personality Styles Clash 	Members begin to form ideals on peers and such mental models drive them to create cliques and put up walls of defense. Confrontations, heated discussions, and tension are normal to happen during this phase. Members may feel targeted and alienated. They may proceed to voice their opinions forcefully or to withdraw and stay quiet altogether. If not careful, <i>groupthink</i> could take over the team and become the uninvited guest that breaks up the cohesion and harmony of working as a team (Hernandez, 2019). However, experts affirm that this step is not always experienced if the employees already have gone through personal and professional development training that build their capacity to think critically, creatively, and collectively while building confidence, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence (DuBrin, 2012).
<b>Stage 3: Norming</b> Goal Oriented Team Bonding 	Members begin to see the value of team relationship and cohesiveness. Moods, dislikes, and discords settle yielding to commitment, rapport, and empathy among team participants. Goals and objectives are established. A new norm begins to develop where all members are given time and space to opine without being judged or criticized. If anyone responds abruptly in opposition, the team leader or moderator immediate signals the member (verbally or nonverbally) as to deflate conflict and establish order. Doing so requires good judgement and diplomacy to avoid disrupting the team synergy between members (Hernandez, 2019). DuBrin (2012) revealed two other sources that bring about team norms during this stage: (a) organizational credos and code of conduct and (b) a team member who ignites and motivates others in the group to go beyond meeting expectations and thrive for elevated levels of performance, initiative, creativity, and positive attitude.
<b>Stage 4: Performing</b> Task Oriented / Strengths-Based Perspective 	Members begin working towards a common goal, focusing on tasks and collaboration. Critical thinking and creative juices evolve into innovation and motivation to surpass expectations. Process of decision-making is in balance with performing the tasks. The team works smoothly and effectively omitting inappropriate conflicts. Everyone understands the issue, objectives, and roles to perform in order to make sound, informed, and holistic decisions. Now, the team moves to the phase of design thinking and development (Hernandez, 2019). Members share opinions and feedback respectfully and constructively while each employee feels their contribution helps create effective and efficient deliverables that resolve issues or provides roadmaps for explanation and further research. Team members report their deliberation as a team in a final plan created in a way that represents and acknowledges the contribution of all members. Optimizing soft-skills at an individual and group level become a common aim for all members. Here, bonds surface as each participant understands the value in diversity (Hernandez, 2019).

Images: fotosearch.com

Hernandez, E. (2019). "Tuckman's Group Dev. Model, How team synergy forms." JPEG file.

**Figure 4.5.** How Team Synergy Forms & Builds Think-Tank Experts

### **Module 4 Closing Remarks**

Leaders that engage employees in collaborating as team members spark innovation and functionality in the workplace while creating efficient working settings. Teamwork done within parameters of cohesiveness brings clarity and strategic thinking to decision-making and to problem-solving tasks thus rendering vital, practical, and diverse perspectives into resolving organizational issues (Veyrat, 2017; Wroblewski, 2018). Nevertheless, bringing together a group of independent, skillful, and creative individuals as members in a team is not enough to achieve performance excellence. Highly performing teams come to be by building communication, cultural intelligence, motivation, and critical and creative thinking (Winsborough & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2017). Now, there are teams that perform satisfactory and there are teams that outperform expectations. The difference between the two lies in the composition of each team—meaning its members!

Knott and Kayes (2012) affirmed that employees who are self-starters tend to focus on continuous development on a personal and professional level becoming engaged and passionate about life and work. According to the experts, these individuals bring to the table elevated levels of service excellence, emotional quotient, commitment, and interpersonal competencies that improve team performance, cohesiveness, and problem-solving skills. Thus, to achieve such level of quality and value on your staff, I recommend you integrate the CHAMP Model for critical thinking into your HR training program. The model's dynamic coaching techniques will inspire and empower employees and teams to become high-performing thinkers and doers!

### Module 4 References

- Boer, L. (2013, June). Giving critical form to organizational vision as a tool for introspection. Paper presented at Participatory Innovation Conference 2013: Lahti, Finland: Mads Clausen Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265604677>
- DuBrin, A. J. (2012). *Essentials of management* (9th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western.
- Hammond, W. (2010). Principles of strength-based practice [PDF file]. *Resiliency Initiatives, AYSCBC*. 1-7. Retrieved from <http://www.ayscbc.org>
- Kaifi, B. A., & Noori, S. A. (2011). Organizational behavior: A study on managers, employees, and teams [PDF file]. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 12(1). 88-97. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org>
- Knott, M. J., & Kayes, D. C. (2012, April 19). Individual contribution to a team: The importance of continuous adaptive learning [PDF file]. *Organization Management Journal*, 9(1) 22-33. doi.org/10.1080/15416518.2012.666948
- Senay, I., Albarracín, D., & Noguchi, K. (2010, April). Motivating goal-directed behavior through introspective self-talk: The role of the interrogative form of simple future tense. *National Institute of Health*, 21(4). 499-504. doi:10.1177/0956797610364751
- Veyrat, P. (2017, July 12). The different types of work teams and how they form [Blog post]. *Helpo.com, Business Management*. Retrieved from <https://www.heflo.com/blog>
- Winsborough, D., & Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2017, January 25). Great teams are about personalities, not just skills [PDF file]. *Harvard Business Review*. 1-7. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2017/01/great-teams-are-about-personalities-not-just-skills>
- Wroblewski, M.T. (2018, November 27). 5 teams every organization needs. Small business. *Chron.com*. Retrieved from <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/5-teams-organization-needs>



# CONCLUSION

**The CHAMP Model : Empowering Employees & Teams to Become High-Performing Thinkers & Doers!**  
*A Theoretical And Practical Training Handbook For Leaders*

Creating an effective, efficient, and robust training program to enhance the critical and creative thinking skills of your staff requires a well-structured, well-balanced, and well-supported training source. Moreover, employing a coaching methodology that aligns its approaches and guidelines with proven tactics of organizational behavior and human development theories provides a systematic roadmap to achieving unparalleled success. The CHAMP Model for critical-thinking and decision-making is the solution to your training dilemmas. Aside from offering all of the aforementioned benefits, this model also encompasses assessment applications and measuring methods to evaluate your employees' performance progress and behavioral growth before and after undergoing the training initiatives found in this theoretical and practical training handbook.

Applying our collective experience, expertise, and research in the fields of education, business, human resources, and administration, we (Chin Loy, Coe, Gordon, and Hernandez) compiled top organizational behavior and development philosophies from primary and secondary sources in order to create this new coaching guide: the CHAMP model. Holding promise to transform standard workers into exceptional employees, the CHAMP Model (acronym for creating highly adaptable and motivated personnel) is a comprehensive and viable training resource that adjusts to any type of organization and any size of workforce. Let us review how the training model works.

First, Figure 1.1 illustrates Module 1 in the CHAMP Model: Learning the Fundamentals of Critical and Creative Thinking. This module lays the foundation for the other three modules and serves as an introduction to developing critical and creative thinking skills. The guidelines in this module map out the basic principles of these aptitudes and takes employees through

exploration, construction, and assessment of these two key competencies. Moreover, you as a leader will be able to show your staff how important critical and creative thinking are to their career advancement and to the organization's overall performance. From top-level executives to operative employees, proficiency in problem solving, people management, decision-making and critical and creative thinking are crucial aptitudes to possess. Globalization and rapid change in technology have increased the demand to recruit high-order thinkers who possess strong analytical and innovative skills. Thus, with Module 1 ground rules, you will be able to identify employees' strengths and weaknesses using the holistic and analytical assessments provided. Employees will improve their cohesive thinking and teamwork competencies with this training.

Then, Figure 2.1 shows Module 2 in the CHAMP Model: Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a Compass to Critical Thinking. Bloom's Taxonomy, a phenomenal resource for educators in both its original and revised state, has now graduated from school and entered the working world. Leaders and employees can use the framework to assist them with starting or perhaps continuing to improve cognitive function. The future will depend heavily on employees who possess these complex skills and are willing to apply them in their professional lives. On the same note, individuals will be more satisfied with their work lives if they are able to develop the skills necessary to not work successfully in a competitive environment, but also use those skills to become more engaged, motivated problem solvers. Here is where the CHAMP Model helps facilitate employees' transition to elevated levels of self-actualization and higher-order thinking.

Next, Figure 3.1 introduces Module 3 in the CHAMP Model: Optimizing Creativity and Inspiring Innovation. Making decisions in the 21st century requires your employees to use critical thinking and creativity. There is always another way to approach a problem and considerations from different perspectives are crucial for formulating effective solutions. Your

staff is made up of individuals who use their unique set of skills to contribute to each project. In order for you to create strong individuals that can effectively contribute to work teams and be creative, they need to be able to handle ambiguity and failure. Realize that creativity takes time and it is not to be rushed. Be supportive of your team members and keep an open mind about their opinions and ideas. Improvisation is a highly creative form of acting which uses the “Yes and” rule to drive an idea. The thinking behind this philosophy is to accept what someone else has stated and expand on his or her idea. This could become a mantra among you and your team as you work together to generate thoughts and make decisions. Reaching for the pinnacle of our personal and professional lives, our training journey now moves to the formation of exceptional work teams. Creating highly effective teams takes having the right people as members.

Lastly, Figure 4.1 unveils Module 4 in the CHAMP Model: Building Superior Thinkers and Exceptional Decision-Makers in Teams. The final destination of the CHAMP Model, this coaching section mentors you as a leader on how to prepare, plan, and execute an engaging training program. Module 4 also teaches you how to build think-tank teams that turn members into creative decision-makers and problem-solvers, inspiring visionaries and leaders, effective communicators and collaborator, and champions for diversity and change.

Hence, serving as the foundation to this easy to follow training handbook, each module in the CHAMP Model will move employees from learning the basics of developing critical and creative thinking to using Bloom’s Taxonomy as a guiding compass to knowledge. Then, individuals will enter an advanced level where they go from learning to improve skills of creativity and innovation to building dynamic teams. This is *The CHAMP Model*: Empowering employees and teams to become high-performing thinkers and doers!

## Contact Us

**We invite you to contact us with your questions and comments!**

M. Chin Loy: [michelle@nova.edu](mailto:michelle@nova.edu) / B. Coe: [bcoe@nova.edu](mailto:bcoe@nova.edu) / H. Gordon: [hgordon@nova.edu](mailto:hgordon@nova.edu)  
E. Hernandez: [eh917@mynsu.nova.edu](mailto:eh917@mynsu.nova.edu) (or) [elizabeth@dsanc.net](mailto:elizabeth@dsanc.net)